

## **Program Narrative**

### Description of the Issue

The City of Lowell is the 5th largest city in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, with approximately 111,000 residents. Lowell is a very diverse community; it has been estimated that nearly one-third of residents have emigrated from a variety of countries including Cambodia, Brazil, Portugal, and several African nations. The Lowell Police Department (LPD) consists of 235 sworn full-time police officers who are responsible for patrolling 14.5 square miles. Additionally, 96 full and part-time civilian staff members support operations in various capacities including: dispatch, records management, community outreach, grant and fiscal management, research and development, crime analysis, and management information systems. This number also includes 10 police cadets whom are currently in the Lowell Police Academy scheduled to graduate in October at which time they will become sworn officers.

Since the mid-1990's, the LPD has been considered a leader in community policing. In fact, the LPD was previously part of the Advancing 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing Initiative, which was a small cohort of law enforcement agencies from across the nation that have made significant strides in implementing the recommendations of the President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing. Civilian staff members have been integral in allowing the department to implement evidenced-based, problem-oriented policing strategies, by allowing the department to deploy more sworn officers in patrol and investigative services. Over the years, these civilian staff members have become instrumental members of this organization, with departmental expertise that assists the LPD in achieving its overall goal of making Lowell the safest city possible for those who live, work, and visit the City. The LPD currently maintains numerous critical civilian staff members completely with state and federal grant funding. Since 2008, the City of Lowell, like many cities nationwide, has been struggling financially. The City is currently facing several required increases in the budget that make it difficult to provide additional funding to civilian personnel. This includes a \$1.7 million increase in pension costs as well as an increase in costs associated with health insurance and the collection of trash and recycling. Lowell is also in the final planning stages for the new high school, which is estimated to cost over \$343 million. The COVID-19 pandemic has also put a great deal of financial restraint on the city. Due to the delayed status of the Commonwealth's FY2021 budget, Lowell is currently operating on a 1/12<sup>th</sup> budget and many departments have had to limit their expenses. As a result of the required increases in the City budget and financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is limited room for civilian personnel in the LPD budget.

### Project Design and Implementation

This grant funding will be used to support the partial salaries of three employees, one from the Crime Analysis and Intelligence Unit and two from the Research and Development Unit. The LPD also has a limited budget for supplies and will use a small portion of funds to purchase necessary office supplies for grant funded staff. The Lowell Police Department is certified by the state as NIBRS compliant and therefore, 3% of fiscal year 2020 funds have not been set aside in the budget for this requirement.

## Capabilities and Competencies

### *Research Analyst (Research and Development Unit)*

The Research Analyst works on all of the LPD's grant-funded programs. She will collect data and conduct analysis to ensure that all evidence-based programs are meeting stated goals and objectives. She is also responsible for analyzing the criminal justice and evidence-based programs within the Department and researching other evidence-based programs that could be implemented in the future. The Research Analyst will also be responsible for collecting data for this solicitation's performance measures and report quarterly accountability metrics through the BJA's Performance Management Tool.

### *Program Manager (Research and Development Unit)*

A portion of funding will be utilized to offset administrative costs incurred related to the management of the grant. Specifically, the Program Manager will dedicate time to tracking and analyzing data to be used in programmatic reports, completing BJA reports, submitting required documentation and responding to requests from BJA. The Program Manager will also communicate with internal partners and external organizations related to the FY 2020 JAG grant program.

### *Crime Analyst (Crime Analysis and Intelligence Unit)*

The LPD will also fund a portion of a Crime Analyst's salary. She reviews, collates, analyzes and disseminates key information in support of the LPD's operational, administrative and investigative efforts. The Analyst participates in the department's bi-weekly Compstat meetings. She also creates crime bulletins relating to repeat offenders, active investigations, and officer safety information and disseminates them throughout the department. The Crime Analyst is essential to the LPD's overall mission as her work assists the department to effectively deploy officers to hot spot locations and ensures that the LPD is implementing data-driven approaches to proactively prevent crime.

### *Supplies*

A small portion of funding will be utilized to purchase office supplies for grant-funded staff, including toner, pens, paper, and folders. The supplies will be used by the Research and Development Unit and Crime Analysis and Intelligence Unit staff members to print reports, crime maps and other important documents.

## Plan for Collecting Data

The Research Analyst will be responsible for collecting data on grant programs, and the Program Manager will be responsible for analyzing performance data for and submitting the grant reports. This includes information on community involvement, supplies, and overall amount of funds used.